

# TIPS FOR A GREENER HOLIDAY AND NEW YEAR

**PASS ON THE HOLIDAY WRAP:** Thrift store items can make great gift packages that will have a second, useful life. Look for picnic hampers, photo boxes, mason jars and baskets. You can add cloth napkins or tea towels to conceal the gift. Consider generic wrapping elements that you can use all year long, such as brown, white or metallic-colored craft paper, which can be used again for birthdays, weddings, showers and hostess gifts. Or make your own wrapping paper out of newspaper or children's artwork. Remember, most store-bought wrapping paper is not recyclable and ends up in landfills.

**THRIFTY DECORATING:** Raid your attic, garage, basement or shed for potential outdoor holiday decorations. Clay pots, kids wagons and galvanized buckets make great holiday displays. Vintage skates and skis, as well as snow sleds and shovels, can add to your winter wonderland theme.

**BENEFIT OTHERS:** Make your purchases count! Buy products from manufacturers who support your causes. Charitable information can generally be found online. Hosting an office party or luncheon? Ask participants to bring a donation as an "entrance" fee.

**HIGH TECH RECYCLING:** For techies, [iRecycle](#) is a free "app" offered by the iPhone store that will help you locate recycling centers in your area.

**TRAVEL EFFICIENTLY:** Whether it's for holiday shopping or a trip to visit family, reduce your fuel consumption by taking public transportation, avoiding drive-thru windows, carpooling or mapping your route for the greatest efficiency and least amount of fuel consumption. Instead of driving to see the holiday lights, take a stroll through your neighborhood!

**POST LESS:** Postcards produce less waste than a greeting card and envelope (and take less postage too)! Consider this alternative for greeting cards, invitations or response cards, as well as thank you notes.

**WHO MOVED MY CUP?:** No choice but to use disposable cups for a holiday function? Be sure to have a permanent marker on hand so your guests can mark their cups and encourage them to only use one.

**GREEN SUPPORT:** While traveling or looking for unique gifts, look for "green" lodging and attractions. [Tennessee State Parks](#) feature a variety of environmentally friendly lodging options with close proximity to some of the most unique natural and historical settings in our state at [tnstateparks.com/greenvillas](http://tnstateparks.com/greenvillas).

**STUFF YOUR STOCKING:** Eco-friendly gifts make great stocking stuffers. A few ideas include reusable shopping bags, aluminum or steel water bottles or a coffee mug from a favorite, local coffee shop. Be sure that soaps and lotions are plant-based and paraben free!

**ENERGY STAR:** Look for the **ENERGY STAR** rating for your electronic gifts, and your gift will keep giving throughout the year with greater energy efficiency. And don't forget to recycle your old electronics to keep them out of landfills.

**TEACH OTHERS:** Give the gift of experience, such as tennis lessons, horseback riding, cooking classes, etc. This is a great way to spend time with friends and family, while passing on your talents.

**MAKE MEMORIES:** Transform items you already have into treasures. There are several companies that will turn college T-shirts into a quilt. Bind old family recipes into a special cookbook. Add a plaque to a baby cradle with the names of the children who have used it over the years.

**ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO THEIR PART:** Some gifts actually benefit the environment such as rain barrels, bird feeders and kitchen compost pails.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION!